

SWAFFHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 31st. DECEMBER,
1946.

Medical Officer of Health: R.O. Townend, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
Sanitary Inspector: R.F. Hudson, A.R. San. I., M.S.I.A.

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the year ended 31st. December, 1946.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area.....7592 acres.
Resident Population.....2603.
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1946).....981.
Rateable Value.....£11582.
Product of Penny Rate.....£46.

Swaffham is a Market Town, the centre of a large Agricultural district, upon which industry it chiefly relies. The only other industries of any note carried on in the area are a canning factory and malting.

Transport facilities are supplied by the L & N.E. Railway Company, the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company and other bus services.

The town is supplied with gas, water and electricity by Statutory Companies.

The Council own a Cemetery and Recreation Ground.

	Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births Legitimate...37	24	13		Birth Rate per 1000 population...14.9.
Illegitimate..... 2	2	-		
Stillbirths..... 1	-	1		25.6 per 1000 total births.
Deaths.....39	16	23		14.9 per 1000 population.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

	Deaths	Rate per 1000 total births.
No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis.....	Nil.	
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes....	Nil.	

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-

All infants per 1000 live births.....	25.6
Legitimate infants per 1000 Legitimate live births.....	25.6
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births.....	Nil.
Deaths from Cancer (all ages).....	11
Measles (all ages).....	Nil.
Whooping Cough (all ages).....	Nil.
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).....	Nil.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Staff.

The Medical Officer of Health is part-time; the Sanitary Inspector also carries out the duties of Highway Surveyor and Building Surveyor and is a full-time officer of the Council.

Ambulance Facilities

The Swaffham Ambulance, staffed by voluntary drivers and members of the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade and the British Red Cross Society, continues to do invaluable work. The present ambulance is heavy and old and a new one is required when and if such is procurable.

Nursing in the Home

The District Nurse continues to do most efficient work. As previously stated there is much too much for one nurse to do and there is actually enough work now for three. The present nurse is most grossly overworked having to add to her already large district by taking on outside areas from time to time. The Council may remember that I bitterly attacked the more or less forcible retirement of the Castleacre nurse who continues to do excellent work in a private capacity. The shortage of nurses is so acute that again I reiterate that her retirement was a mistake.

Treatment Centres and Clinics.

A monthly Welfare Clinic is run by the Norfolk County Council.

Hospital

The Cottage Hospital, having three female and seven male beds, still continues to carry on and is a boon to the district. King's Lynn and Norwich hospitals receive cases that cannot be dealt with at Swaffham while the County Infectious Disease Hospital drains infectious cases. The lack of Xray at the hospital is greatly felt, and much petrol, money and inconvenience could be saved if such were made available.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water

Water is supplied by the Swaffham Waterworks Co. Ltd. The water is chlorinated at its source and the limits of supply is within a radius of 1,500 yards from the Market Cross.

On the 10th. May, 1946, Colonel G. Ewart Rhodes, M. Inst. C.E., Ministry of Health Inspector, held an Inquiry into the alleged failure of the Swaffham Waterworks Company Ltd. to give an adequate supply of water within their area of supply. The Inquiry was held under powers under Section 13 of the Water Act, 1945.

The result of the Inquiry was that the Minister was satisfied that the Council's complaints against the Company, some of which were serious, were well founded. A 24 hours supply was restored soon after the Inquiry as a result of a big reduction in waste. The Directors gave the Consulting Engineer a free hand in all the immediate measures he proposed to take, and the Minister informed the Company that he looked to them to bend all their energies to maintaining a continuous supply.

Water contd.

The Company proceeded with the work of renewing and repairing defective mains and a 24 hours supply was maintained during the remainder of the year.

Once again I stress the short sighted policy of partial softening not being provided. Such provision would save its cost in tea and soap in a very short time.

Drainage & Sewerage

A combined system of Sewerage exists in the Council's area.

The 6" sewer in Whitsands Road was extended 80 yards to serve 2 new bungalows.

The Sewage Disposal Works are situated on the Watton Road about 1½ miles from the town. During the year 60 yds. of storm water drain was relaid at the works. The Council have had under consideration the improvement of the works and at the end of the year steps were being taken to obtain the services of a local engineer to make a report on the works.

I have complained from time to time that with the increased building and consequent increased water carriage, the sewage farm would eventually become inadequate and I propose to watch this carefully during the ensuing year.

Closet Accommodation

During the year 9 vault closets were converted to pail closets - piped water supply and sewerage facilities were not available. Approximately 301 houses are still on the conservancy system. Nine pail closets were converted to water closets in the same period.

Public Cleansing

The collection of household refuse has continued as in previous years. One horse and cart and 2 men are engaged on this work and the number of dust bins is approximately 960. Salvage has been collected during the year.

HOUSING

Local Authority

The First Stage contract for Roads and Sewers on the Watton Road site was completed during the year. At the end of the year work was in progress on two contracts for traditional permanent houses.

Contract No. 1 for 12 houses (3 bedrooms).

Position 31st. December, 1946.

1 pair almost ready for occupation.

2 pairs roofed in.

1 pair to first floor joist level.

2 pairs to ground floor window sill height.

Contract No. 2 for 24 Houses (3 Bedrooms) & 8 Bungalows (2 Bedrooms).

2 Pairs of bungalows to roof level.

2 pairs of bungalows to damp course level.

Private Enterprise.

Habitation Certificates were issued for 2 bungalows and 1 house of the permanent type, and for 2 temporary bungalows. In addition 1 large dwelling house was converted into 2 self-contained flats. At the end of the year 4 houses and 1 bungalow were in course of erection and 1 large property was being converted into 4 flats.

Repairs were carried out to existing houses by the use of informal notices served on owners. 8 houses had baths installed & 11, scullery sinks.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

	<u>Inspections.</u>	<u>Informal Notices.</u>	<u>Remarks.</u>
Drainage	24	3	Work done.
Factories, Workshops, & Bakehouses.	32	2	Work done.
Slaughterhouses & Butchers' Shops.	158	-	-
Food Shops.	17	2	Work done.
Cowsheds & Dairies etc.	8	2	Work done.
Restaurants.	6	3	Work done.
Verminous and filthy premises.	1	1	Work done.
Housing.	55	31	Work done.
Nuisances.	5	2	Work done.
Infectious Diseases.	2	-	Reports to M.O.H. & disinfecting.
Rats & Mice.	21	-	Work done by War Agricultural Committee.
Refuse Collection.	4	-	Complaints dealt with.
Waterworks.	5	-	-
Schools.	3	-	Re. repairs.

Factories Act, 1937.

There are 24 premises registered under the above Act
made up as follows:-

Garages.....7
Canning Factory.....1
Maltings.....1
Builders Yards.....5
Firewood Businesses.....2
Printing Works.....1
Bake houses.....3
Cinema.....1
Gas Works.....1
Waterworks.....1
Agricultural Engineers.....1

The factories have been regularly visited and informal
notices served when necessary.

There were no cases referred by H.M. Inspector during
the year.

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS OF WATER

8th. August, 1946.

Distinctive No. or Label.	Total Solids in Solution.	Ammonia.		Chlor- ine in Chlor- ides.	Nitro- gen as Nitr- ates.	Nit- rates.	Oxygen absorbed from Perman- ganate.	Hardness.		Bacteriological Results.		
		Free and Saline.	Albun- inoid.					Total.	Perman- ent.	Colons per ml. on agar at 37°C	Bacillus Coliform.	Pres- ent in Absent in.
No. 1. "Swainhan Waterworks".	43.4	Nil.	trace.	3.4	1.23	Nil.	Nil.	26°	8.5°	309	-	100 ml.
No. 2. "Tumbler Hill, Swiss Cottage".	42.7.	Nil.	0.0007.	3.4	1.23	Nil	Nil.	26°	8.1°	12	-	100 ml.

Physical Characters.

No. 1. Both samples bright and clean on receipt and so remaining.

No. 2. Iron in solution faint trace in each case.

Remarks:-

Both these samples represent a pure and wholesome supply, quite fit for drinking and domestic purposes. The water is of great organic and bacteriological purity. It contains merely a trace of iron, consequently no rusty deposit could be derived from it. In addition 4 samples were submitted to me for observations as to sediment. They were perfectly clear and bright, and have remained so after 6 days. They were respectively marked:- Lynn Road, Bells yard., Mr. Howes, Tank Lane,, Shambles standpipe, and Station Terrace.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply

The whole of the registered premises were inspected during the year and instructions given to limewhite etc. when necessary.

A Pasteurising Plant of the Holder type was installed at the Limes Dairy and after samples of the milk had satisfied the Phosphatase and Methelene Blue Tests a licence to use the special designation Pasteurised was granted. There is one T.T. Producer and one accredited producer in the district.

Meat & other Foods.

Shops and Slaughterhouses have been regularly inspected and usually found to be clean and tidy.

CARCASES INSPECTED & CONDEMNED

	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Sheep & Lambs.</u>	<u>Pigs.</u>
Approximate number killed.	379	1455	135
Approximate number inspected.	379	1455	135
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis</u>			
Whole carcasses condemned.	6	7	7
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned,	114	17	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis.	31.4%	1.6%	7.4%
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>			
Whole carcasses condemned.	4	-	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned.	90.	-	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis.	24.2%	-	1.5%

MEAT, OFFAL & OTHER FOODS CONDEMNED.

Carcasses or parts of carcasses.....8318 lbs.

Offal.....6054 lbs.

Tinned Food (Grocers' Shops).....122 tins.

Tinned meat (Butchers' Shops).....-

Cheese.....16 lbs.

Bacon.....30 lbs.

Parsnips.....1 ton 7 cwts.

Eggs.....30.

PREVALENCE OF, & CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS & OTHER DISEASES.

Notifiable diseases during the year 1946.

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total cases notified.</u>	<u>Cases admitted to hospital.</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever.	2	Nil.	Nil.
Whooping Cough.	4	Nil.	Nil.
Diphtheria.	1	1	Nil.
Erysipelas.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Measles.	26	Nil.	Nil.
Pneumonia.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Puerperal Pyrexia.	1	Nil.	Nil.
Jaundice.	1	Nil.	Nil.

Cases notified under age groups.

<u>Disease</u>	<u>2-</u>	<u>4-</u>	<u>5-10</u>	<u>10-15</u>	<u>15-20</u>	<u>20-35</u>	<u>35-45</u>	<u>45-65.</u>
Scarlet Fever			2					
Whooping Cough		2	2					
Diphtheria					1			
Erysipelas								
Measles	1	8	16			1		
Pneumonia								
Puerperal Pyrexia						1		
Jaundice			1					

TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases & Mortality during 1946.

<u>Age Periods</u>	<u>New Cases.</u>				<u>Deaths.</u>			
	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>		<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-respiratory</u>	
	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
2-10								
10-20								
20-30	1					1		
30-40								
(or over).								

Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year under report 33 children were immunised; this shows a decrease over the previous year. I do not think this is because of lack of interest of the mothers but because some have left the town and in point of fact, almost the same number of children as in the previous years, have been immunised during the year under report.

Scabies

A considerable number of cases occurred during the year but as this disease is not notifiable I have no means of estimating the number.

Venereal Diseases

One case of Venereal Disease has occurred during the year.

General Remarks

In conclusion gentlemen, I would add that the general health of the town has been good. I am of opinion that the enforced austerity and wholly inadequate rations to the labouring community are beginning to make themselves felt throughout the countryside, so that no man can give of his best for long periods without a drain on his physical reserve. However, I gather worse is to come so we can but hope for the best.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

R.O. TOWNEND.

Medical Officer of Health.